

Veterans News

Contact: JP Tremblay
Jerry Jones
Jaime Arteaga
Legislation and Public Affairs
916-653-2192
November 20, 2009

MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT ALEJANDRO RUIZ DIES

It is with great sadness that the California Department of Veterans Affairs joins the family of retired Master Sergeant Alejandro R. Ruiz, a Medal of Honor Recipient, World War II veteran and resident of the Veterans Home of California, Yountville in mourning his death. MSgt. Ruiz was 85 years old.

"On behalf of the California Department of Veterans Affairs, I offer my sincere condolences and prayers to the family and friends of Alejandro Ruiz, who passed way today," said Secretary Roger Brautigan. "We, of course, are saddened by Alejandro's passing, but are thankful that he walked among us, touched us and graced us with his presence. Alejandro, we are forever grateful for your service to our country. Your service and sacrifices will not be forgotten. You are, and will remain, a true American Hero. May you forever rest in peace."

Medal of Honor Citation for Alejandro Ruiz:

When his unit was stopped by a skillfully camouflaged enemy pillbox, he displayed conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity above and beyond the call of duty. His squad, suddenly brought under a hail of machinegun fire and a vicious grenade attack, was pinned down. Jumping to his feet, Pfc. Ruiz seized an automatic rifle and lunged through the flying grenades and rifle and automatic fire for the top of the emplacement. When an enemy soldier charged him, his rifle jammed. Undaunted, Pfc. Ruiz whirled on his assailant and clubbed him down. Then he ran back through bullets and grenades, seized more ammunition and another automatic rifle, and again made for the pillbox. Enemy fire now was concentrated on him, but he charged on, miraculously reaching the position, and in plain view he climbed to the top. Leaping from 1 opening to another, he sent burst after burst into the pillbox, killing 12 of the enemy and completely destroying the position. Pfc. Ruiz's heroic conduct, in the face of overwhelming odds, saved the lives of many comrades and eliminated an obstacle that long would have checked his unit's advance. www.cmohs.org/recipient-detail/2978/ruiz-alejandro-r-renteria.php

Funeral arrangements for MSgt. Ruiz are pending.

-30-